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Hawaiian Botanical Society

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EVENTS

Pacific Tropical Botanical Garden

The Frank E. Gonnett Foundation has granted $10,000 to the Pacific Tropical Botanical Garden to help further its work. William S. Stewart, Scientific Director of the Garden received news of this award in December. As reported in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin: "The garden is a congressionally chartered corporation with headquarters at Lawai, Kauai. Its intent is to preserve rare and exotic plants. It takes 75 to 80 years for a botanical garden to mature according to Stewart. The garden is now four years old and in another two years can start to operate as a research center for botany and horticulture and a training center for tropical horticulture. Studies of the nutritional potential of tropical plants are planned. There is a program for introduction of ornamentals from all parts of the tropics."

A Friend of Botany Passes on

We were all saddened to learn of the passing away of Howard A. Woolford, a long time member of the Society. Services were held at Punchbowl, January 4, 1974.

LETTERS AND MISCELLANY

Dr. Otto Degener on Silverswords

Following are parts of a letter dated November 6, 1973, from Dr. Degener to the Editor:

"I received postmarked Nov. 4 our Haw. Bot. Soc. Newsletter for October, and am particularly interested in Mr. Herbert K. Kobayashi's articles about the 'Present Status of the Ahinahina or Silversword.' It certainly took the author into fascinating areas for careful research to get his up-to-date field data. I wish I had a copy of his final report available.

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

Perhaps I may be allowed to add a little, not to the present, but to the past status of our plant. Hearing from Mrs. Eric Fennel that her granddaughter was working on the genus Argyroxiphium, I wrote her Oct. 30, 1973 in part referring to the silversword, references perhaps of interest to Mr. Kobayashi and other readers. Whether Supt. Wingate of the Haleakala Section of Hawaii National Park ever bothered to show my July 1935 letter, mentioned below, to Mr. Lamb before his study of the species in 1936 I do not know.

(Just by unusual chance I have a copy dated July 22, 1935 that I wrote the Supt.) 'Dear Mr. Wingate: I have been botanizing in the field during the last few weeks so did not receive your letter of July 10 until a few days ago.

In 1927 I spent three weeks within the crater, botanizing quite extensively. The largest number of silverswords at that time seemed to be concentrated on the cinder cones near the 'bottomless pit' and on Puu o Maui. Here the clouds rolling in from Koolau Gap from about 3 P.M., on drench them from time to time.

In referring to my seeing barely a hundred specimens, I refer TO PLANTS OF ALL ages. Young plants were extremely rare. Flowering plants had seeded but most of the seeds had been eaten by maggots of a peculiar fly. If you counted 1808 silverswords on one cinder cone alone, the species certainly has increased enormously.

In 1927 I camped in the Holua Cave and botanized WITHIN the crater, not on the outer rim. Much of my time was spent in Koolau Gap, and on the cinder cones as I was particularly interested in the silverswords to be found there. I spent two nights near the Laie Spring and in Kaupo Gap but found no silverswords practically east of Mamani Hill.

Botanically I consider Koolau Gap just outside of the National Park boundary the richest and most interesting spot on the mountain. Could not the Park take part of this area under its wing? In 1927 a watering trough was there to make it more convenient for cattle to browse on the greensword and peculiar geraniums - plants growing practically in no other spot on earth! Yours sincerely, Otto Degener'

In the Haw. Digest for March 1948 I wrote a somewhat popular article about Argyroxiphium in which I foolishly and uncritically followed D. D. Keck's idea that Argyroxiphium and related genera were of Asiatic origin. I should have stuck to the correct idea of an American origin, an idea held by some of the earliest and keenest botanists.

May I have a few more copies of the Oct. Newsletter for New York and elsewhere?

Aloha,

Otto Degener"

Avoid Plant Poisoning

Become familiar with the dangerous plants in your area. Know them by sight and by name.

Do not eat wild plants, including mushrooms, unless you are positive of their identification.

Keep plants, seeds, fruits, and bulbs away from infants.

Teach children at an early age to keep unknown plants and plant parts out of their mouths. Make them aware of the potential danger of poisonous plants.

Teach children to recognize plants which cause dermatitis.

Be certain you know the plants used by children as playthings (seeds or fruits, stems, etc.) or as skewers for meat or marshmallows.

Do not allow children to suck nectar from flowers or make "tea" from leaves.

Know the plant before eating its fruits.

Do not rely on pets, birds, or squirrels to indicate non-poisonous plants.

Avoid smoke from burning plants, unless you know exactly what they are.

Remember, heating and cooking do not always destroy the toxic substance.

Label and store bulbs and seeds safely away from children and pets.

Anon.

Hawaiian Plants Found in Capt. Nicholson's Appendix

Though not now of scientific importance, Capt. H. Whalley Nicholson in his book "From Sword to Share; or a Fortune in Five Years at Hawaii" furnishes an unusual appendix for the year 1881. Pages 298 to 300, under the heading "Algae of the Hawaiian Islands" list 64 vernacular names and 111 scientific ones of limu, unfortunately in separate and distinct columns. Pages 300 and 301, under the heading "List of Hawaiian Ferns, compiled by Charles Derby, Esq.", mention 138 fern, psilotum and lycopodium species. Pages 302 to 304 ends with a "List of Hawaiian Mosses and Hepaticae. Prepared by D. D. Baldwin, Esq." Of this assemblage 73 species are "Hawaiian Scale-Mosses or Hepaticae"; while 89, many identified by D. C. Eaton, are "Hawaiian Mosses."

Otto and Isa Degener

A Serious Matter

Studies by the Division of Forestry and U.S. Forest Service of the ohia forest decline on the Big Island reveal that between 1965 and 1972 the epidemic accelerated. The area of severe decline category increased at an average rate of 6,500 acres per year in the 200,000 acre study area.

R. Nelson

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Minutes of the Regular Meeting, December 3, 1973

The meeting was brought to order by the president, Ted Green at 7:35 pm. The minutes of the previous regular meeting were read and approved as corrected.

The treasurer's annual report was presented. November's plant exchange brought in $43.75 for the refreshment fund. There were 28 members and 3 guests in attendance.

Reporting for the Agricultural Advisory Committee, Ron Hurov spoke of a display at the Conference on Diversified Agriculture 4 weeks previous in which the Botanical Society presented a display. He said the energy crisis would have a profound effect on research on natural products, such as rubber and natural soap. He suggested that this may be a great chance for research funding from the Federal government and other sources.

Ruth Gay of the Conservation Committee announced that Sunset magazine was using the society's files on the ornamental trees of Ala Moana Park.

The secretary gave the annual report for 1973.

In OLD BUSINESS, Ray Baker announced that the tree planting project on the UH campus in front of Hale Kuahiwi by East West Center was postponed until late January due to the concern of the resident women that the trees were a threat to safety at night. The plans were being revised to move the plants back from the sidewalk.

Ted Green reported for the Executive Board on the proposed increase in members of the Board. He said that there are already seven members. The Board now achieves continuity by succession of officers from vice-president to president and the treasurer and secretary both serving for several terms.

Concerning the request for money from Flora Pacifica it was expressed that the venture was extravagant and ill-advised. A motion to deny the request was passed.

Reporting for the Science Fair Committee, Milton Manhoff asked for judges to go into the schools in the preliminaries. Many fine botanical exhibits, he said, have in the past been eliminated at this stage.

Nominations were opened for officers for 1974. Those elected were:

Dr. William Theobald, president
Dr. Derral Herbst, vice-president
Ms. Jean Maka, secretary
Mr. Paul Yamanaka, treasurer
Dr. Charles Lamoureux, Director

A round of applause was given the outgoing officers.

In NEW BUSINESS, Dr. St. John announced that his new book listing all of Hawaii's flowering plants will be available shortly.

Wayne Gagne announced the proposed Regulation 38 of the State Division of Fish and Game concerning the establishment, protection and regulation of a wildlife sanctuary at Paiko Lagoon, Kuliouou, Oahu. He announced a public hearing set for December 17.

Ron Hurov brought seeds of a rare palm, Pigafetta filaris for distribution. He also suggested that the Society consider keeping a log of rare plants which our members have, following the pattern of the Rare Fruit Council.

The president-elect, Dr. Theobald, introduced the speaker outgoing president, Mr. Ted Green, Landscape Architect, who gave an illustrated presentation of "Some Environmental Concerns."

John Obata had some Hawaiian gourd plants Laginaria siceraria for distribution.

Christmas refreshments were served by Beatrice Krauss.

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Jean Maka, Secretary

Minutes of the Regular Meeting, January 7, 1974

The meeting was brought to order by the vice-president, Derral Herbst, at 7:30 p.m. The minutes of the previous regular meeting were read and approved. There were 35 members and 5 guests in attendance.

The treasurer, Paul Yamanaka, announced that dues were due (in December) and gave his monthly report.

There were no committee reports.

In OLD BUSINESS, it was announced that one of our members, Howard Woolford had passed away.

The auditor reported that the books for 1973 were correct.

In NEW BUSINESS, it was announced that the bouquet on the refreshment table was brought by Oscar Kirsch. Mr. Kirsch also displayed his orchids.

Robert Warner asked for volunteers to help at Waimanalo some Saturday since upkeep was not budgeted this year.

The vice-president, Derral Herbst, introduced the speaker, Dr. Herbert Kobayashi, who gave an illustrated presentation of "The ecology and present status of the silversword."

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. after which refreshments were served.

Jean Maka, Secretary

PUBLICATIONS

Notes from Dr. Otto Degener

The following article deals with the chemistry of Pseudocyphellaria hawaiiensis Magn. (p. 178) from Hawaii, and that of Usnea rockii Mot. (p. 182) from Maui: Follmann, G., and Huneck, S. Mitteilungen ueber Flechteninhaltsstoffe. Philippia 1/4: 173-185, 1972.

The following was reviewed in Phylologia: Zepernick, B. Arzneipflanzen der Polynesien, 1-307, 1972. Dietrick Reimer, Publisher, Berlin.

St. John, Harold 1973
Revision of the genus Pandanus Stickman. Part 35 additional Pandanus species from New Guinea. Pacific Science 27(1): 44-91.

Tanaka, J. S., R. R. Romanowski, Jr., & P. J. Ito (June) 1972
Herbicides evaluation studies with carrots (Daucus carota L.) and onions (Allium cepa L.) in Hawaii. Hawaii Agricultural Experiment Station, Research Report 180.

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HAWAIIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY

c/o Department of Botany, University of Hawaii
3190 Maile Way, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

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THE HAWAIIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY was founded in 1924 to "advance the science of Botany in all its applications, encourage research in Botany in all its phases," and "promote the welfare of its members and to develop the spirit of good fellowship and cooperation among them." Any person interested in the plant life of the Hawaiian Islands is eligible for membership in this Society.

Dues: Regular - $5.00 per year
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HAWAIIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY
c/o Department of Botany
University of Hawaii
3190 Maile Way
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

DR. F. RAYMOND FOSBERG
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
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